

# **—SOLIDARITY**

**FOR WORKERS' POWER** 

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**Volume 2 Number 3**

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# whither peanuts?

May Day was noisy. The Labour Party rally was wrecked. Mr. Brown's 'freedom of speech' was undermined. It was the best May Day demo for years.

The smoke settled. And people started asking: 'who did it?'.

The daily press pinned the blame on CND. But Canon Collins, Chairman of CND, was not so sure. He wrote to Mr. Gaitskell 'condemning and expressing regret for the incidents'.

Was it the Communist Party? Gaitskell and Brown claimed that it was. But the Daily Worker would have none of it. 'All the evidence shows that it was members of the Labour Party - provoked by Messrs. Gaitskell and Brown - who demonstrated'.

The Daily Herald (May 7, 1962) suggested it was members of the Socialist Labour League. The 'National Secretary' denied this: 'No member of the S.L.L. had anything to do with the disturbances'. (Newsletter, May 12, 1962). He even considered it libellous to suggest that Trotskyists might have been involved in anything as noisy and unconstitutional. Anyhow, S.L.L. members had been 'instructed' to attend their London Area Committee's own meeting. We know from experience they will all have put duty before pleasure.

Well, who was it? Some supporters of 'Solidarity' were there (but unfortunately not that many)! Most were clearly Young Socialists - many of them known to us. We think it excellent that they should have been there and demonstrated in this way.

The most diverse elements have denounced these May Day scenes as undemocratic. Where does democracy lie in this matter?

Throughout most of the year the professional politicians in control of the Labour Party machine themselves decide how best not to implement collective decisions. They unscrupulously deprive the rank and file of any effective voice in the determination of policy. All the mass media are at their disposal to shout down those who object.

But every so often they have to come in contact with their 'supporters'. At conferences they can take refuge behind the whole elaborate structure of standing orders, procedure and partisan chairmanship. But on May Day they go naked to the masses. Ordinary members then get a chance of telling their leaders exactly what they think of them. This demonstration at least is theirs... even if police do protect the platform. When confronted with the mass participation they so earnestly call for, the bureaucrats react by bullying and bluster.

There are further implications to the whole enlightening episode. For years, a number of organizations have been building 'left wings' in the Labour Party. They call on their supporters to 'stand up

and fight' against the rotten leaderships the machine produces with such monotonous regularity. But they take fright at a real and open challenge - a physical confrontation of ideas and individuals. All they really want is a ding-dong battle of resolutions and faction fights in wards, G.M.C.s and selection committees. Politics for them is a combination of manoeuvres and political sleight of hand which would substitute them for the present leaders, without a mass involvement of the ranks.

Such involvement cannot, by its very nature, ever be contained within the rigid framework of constitutional procedure and polite debate. It cannot be turned on and off, like a tap, at the will of the leaders. If it really develops it will create methods of its own: noisy, rumbustious, disruptive... and ultimately effective. This is why we welcome the events of May Day 1962. They indicate that many socialists, both in and out of the Labour Party, are fed up with the way the Party works and are seeking, although somewhat inarticulately, to find alternative solutions.

The witch-hunt against 'the left' has begun. Frankly we cannot get steamed up about it. It is neither new nor unexpected. Why should we take sides in this shadow boxing? Professional revolutionaries know that the Labour Party is one of the built-in stabilisers of modern society, that if they ever use it effectively, even as a platform, they will be thrown out. If they want to demonstrate this in practice, to layer after layer of their supporters, that is entirely their own affair.

'The Labour Party cannot for very long now include both Mr. Gaitskell and left wing socialists'. News-letter, May 12, 1962.

We do however feel that Transport House is being short sighted in hatcheting these extremely loyal party members, without whose unstinting aid the party would be in an even worse condition.

The witch-hunt may extend deeper into the ranks of the Young Socialist movement. Many will then find themselves confronted with a choice. They will either accept the dictates of the non-socialists who control the party (in order to retain the dubious privilege of party membership). Or they will continue a real struggle for socialism, even beyond the confines of the Party machine.

In this struggle, as on May Day, they will find us at their side.

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# NEWS FROM FORDS

The men at the giant Ford plant at Dagenham recently won a victory for all workers employed by the Company. This was not trumpeted around in the various journals of the 'left', for it was not won through the 'statemanship' of union leaders. It was the result of a long, dogged and united struggle in the workshops, against both management and officials.

Last September, negotiations on wages and conditions between the Company and the 22 unions 'representing' the men broke down, allegedly because of the strings attached to the offers (a little more pay and a shorter week against a lot more 'discipline'). What above all stuck in the men's throat was the plan completely to abolish the morning tea break, before any concessions were made on hours. The union leaders took up belligerent postures (to avoid unofficial action!). They even threatened an 'official' strike unless the strings were removed.

On October 11, a 'settlement' was suddenly announced. The management conceded the 40-hour week (as from Oct. 28), granted a  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. increase on grade rates, but reduced the morning tea break from 10 to 5 minutes. The leaders of the AEU, of the TGWU and of the GMWU, all agreed to this. Mr. William Beard, Chairman of the union side of the Negotiating Committee said: 'We expect our people to keep these agreements. We have no evidence that they won't'. Mr. L. Blakeman, the Labour Relations Manager was less optimistic: 'We will have to do our utmost' he said, 'to restrict the tea break to five minutes...'

The firm tried to introduce the cut on October 30, 1961. In March 1962 it conceded defeat. This is the story of how Mr. Beard's 'people' failed to rise to his 'expectations' and of how Mr. Blakeman's 'utmost' proved less than enough... It is also one Ford worker's view of what the issues behind the dispute really were.

The Ford tea break row was in my opinion a successful attempt by the unions to sell the men short.

If, last September, the union leaders had reported back to the Shop Stewards that they had accepted the 40-hour week (without pay loss) plus a meagre  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hour, they would have had a strike on their hands. So to keep production going they connived the tea break diversion with the management.

In cooking up the 'loss of tea break' red herring, in telling the Ford workers that the management proposed cutting out the tea break, they succeeded in diverting the men's attention from the inadequacy of the settlement. In urging restraint, promising nothing (whilst at the same time giving the men the impression that an official strike would begin in two weeks time if the management did not back down) the union bosses succeeded in keeping the men working.

As foretold by some cynical observers (in whom past experience had bred a distrust of union officials and company management), at the eleventh hour, just before the deadline was reached, Eureka!, a solution was found! Thanks to the tireless, patient efforts of our noble, selfless and infinitely wise T.U. negotiators a 'face saving' solution was found. The threatened 'national catastrophe' was averted. The magnanimous Ford management would be content with a mere 5 minutes off our tea break.

The next move was up to the Ford workers. Being the ungrateful, stinking peasants the management always knew them to be, they just wouldn't cooperate. The union bosses appealed to the men to cooperate with the management and to make the scheme work.

The men just wouldn't obey their lords and masters. Instead of one or two men of each section collecting a dozen or so cups of tea from the tea trolleys for their mates, each man lined up individually. Each wanted change from a £1 or 10/- note for a 3d. cup of tea. This way the tea break sometimes dragged out to half an hour or more. Later this was changed to the previous routine of bulk collections and sitting down for 10 minutes, in defiance of the management.

The management's reaction was first to threaten. When this had no effect, they spread rumours to divide and confuse the men. Departments in the main plant were told: 'P.T.A. only took 5 minutes'. P.T.A. men were told: 'Main plant and River plant only took 5 minutes'. This did not have much success.

Eventually the management, generous as ever, announced that they had decided that five minutes was insufficient time to drink a cup of tea. The tea break would revert to ten minutes. Making a brief reference to the men's refusal to cooperate, the management declared: 'This means no victory for either side'.

The Ford workers found this strange comment, for it was certainly not a defeat for the men who defied both management and unions and 'sat it out' for 10 minutes every morning.

After the success of their 'non-cooperation' tactics, the extent to which their attention and energies had been diverted from the pay issue dawned gradually on the men. After 3 months of being 'good boys' (in spite of the usual provocative tactics of supervisors and foremen, etc) their main problems were still unsettled.

These remain: the guaranteed weekly wage, satisfaction re Halewood plant, and raising of Ford wages and conditions to standards and levels enjoyed by other car workers in other U.K. firms.

In my opinion workers, anywhere, will always be sold short by the union officials. The delegation of responsibility to groups of union bureaucrats who seem more interested in the management's problems than in their members, is the first step to slavery, legal as well as economic.

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## INCITEMENT AT FORDS ?

'Only about a third of the workers have been content with a five minute break. The rest have consistently taken longer'...

'The management has issued appeals and threats by turns... but always in vain'...

'It has been clear for several months that the management would ultimately have to choose between capitulation and rigorous enforcement. It has now reluctantly decided to acknowledge defeat'...

'The company... will have achieved something if it manages, in the future, to restrict tea-breaks to 10 minutes'...

'Militants will see this as a victory for shop floor resistance'...

'Workers... will be tempted to conclude that indiscipline pays'.

Ronald Stevens,  
Industrial Correspondent  
Daily Telegraph, 12.3.62

## MOMENT OF TRUTH

'Why employ union officials if you're not going to do what they say', Mr. E.G. Bennett, a TGWU official, shouted at the striking Fords tea girls on May 15.

And us dopes who put'em there, believing they'd do as we said!

## A BUSMAN WRITES

On February 23, London Transport proposed wage increases to its busmen: 7/- for drivers and 6/- for conductors. The increase, when submitted to the garages, was turned down by 37 for and 60 against.

This rejection was not over the amount but over the differential between back and front. It was felt by garages that the acceptance of this differential would add to the division of bus workers and endanger the success of future struggles. This led to the acceptance of 6/6 for both drivers and conductors.

The demand by the bus workers for closer equality of wages between different jobs is a result of a deep-going solidarity among the crews. This is going on everyday and all the time.

For instance when an inspector is spotted on a route by a crew and that crew comes across another bus heading towards the inspector, the second crew is given the 'thumbs down' - to show what lies ahead. The second crew which may be running early will immediately run to time. This is done all the time and in many different ways. It enables crews to snatch some time for a cup of tea at the terminus, or to make certain all fares are collected when inspectors are about.

It is no wonder that the first reaction to this small offer by the employers was opposition to the differentials that would widen the divisions amongst workers and endanger solidarity between them. Solidarity is the central issue for defence and entails a real struggle of every one of us.

Colin Seal.

## SOME EARLY SOLIDARISTS ?

✓ Democracy: in which you say what you like and do what you're told. (Gerald Barry).

An honest politician is one who when he is bought will stay bought. (Simon Cameron).

## EMPTY THE GAOLS!

by Nick Ralph

There are few martyrs left in Britain... even in the Committee of 100. Most of us have a very different attitude to punishment. Our enthusiasm is inversely proportional to the size of the penalties. Theirs, perversely proportional.

Curiously, we believe that the numbers of demonstrators would increase if they thought they might get off lightly, or even scot free. Where we can use technical pleas of 'not guilty', we should. Police lies should be challenged. The more identities we have, the more often we can be bound over.

After the splendidly noisy sit-down outside the American Embassy some of us were given a conducted tour down a crowded Oxford Street in an open-backed truck, driven by a police chauffeur. The cops counted us as we shouted: 'NO MORE TESTS!', 'NO MORE TESTS!'.

In Tottenham Court Road Police Station PCs C385 and C577 \* 'took charge' of a dozen of us. They tried to take our names and addresses. They asked us to leave the truck... and then lifted us out. While they were occupied with me, John Lane left the puddle in which he had been dumped and quietly walked away, bidding good night to the policeman at the gate, and making for home.

The credit side of the demonstration was over. From here on, it was debit all the way - several pounds still unpaid. I did not get the chance that John got... this time.

The boys in blue prepared to take us in. As they checked our number again, an odd expression crossed their faces. They ordered a recount. Then it dawned on them. The Home Secretary had a reduced majority!

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\* False numbers will be used in future...



# *the negro struggle*

— BY OWEN CAHILL —

This is the second of two articles by a young American sympathiser. It describes the violent and dramatic events which took place last August and September in Monroe, North Carolina. Reactions to these events are today a touchstone to people's attitude to the struggle for Negro equality.

Monroe, North Carolina, is a small town, the county seat of Union County. It is probably a bit worse for Negroes than most of the rural and semi rural South. Monroe is the regional headquarters of the Ku Klux Klan, the racist organization that parades in hoods and robes.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, NAACP, is the largest organization working for Negro Rights in America. It is by no means militant. In many towns and cities in the South, it is a social club for the black bourgeoisie.

The NAACP in Monroe was much like this. In 1954, Robert Williams, a young negro machinist, was released from the Marines. He returned to Monroe and joined the NAACP. He found that it was almost dead. He became president, because no one else would take the job, and he tried to build the branch. Only one of the educated Negroes helped him in this. This was Dr. Albert Perry, a Texan who had moved to Monroe after World War II. Since the black bourgeoisie would not join the NAACP, Williams began to enlist the Negro masses. He sought and obtained the membership of laborers, small farmers, and domestic servants.

Only one other NAACP branch in the South has been built like this. That was the branch headed by E.D. Nixon in Montgomery, Alabama. This was the group that sparked the famous Montgomery bus boycott.

Once the NAACP branch in Monroe was built, it passed to action to secure Negro rights. The public library in Monroe had always been closed to Negroes. It was integrated by a group of Negroes who entered the library and checked out books. Williams tried to integrate the schools of Monroe by entering his children in the white primary school. When refused, he sued the board of education. There was a swimming pool for

the whites in Monroe, from which Negroes were barred. The NAACP tried to integrate the pool. When Williams, Perry and others tried to enter the pool they were refused admittance. They set up a picket line at the entrance to the pool. This was the first picket line ever seen in Monroe. There are no unions in Union County, North Carolina.

An example of Monroe justice is the famous 'kissing case'. This involved two Negro boys, aged nine and seven, who were charged in 1958 with the heinous crime of kissing a white girl, aged eight. For this, they were sentenced to an indefinite term in juvenile prison. Williams knew that these children could not expect justice in a North Carolina court. So he tried to put pressure on the authorities by appealing to public opinion. He publicized the case and obtained support, not only in the U.S., but throughout the world. Letters, cables and petitions of protest poured into the office of governor of North Carolina. The U.S. State Department became worried by this international reaction and put some pressure on the governor of North Carolina. The boys were released.

The racists of Monroe did not forgive Williams and the NAACP for these challenges to white supremacy. The Ku Klux Klan planned raids on the homes of Williams and of Dr. Perry. Williams organized defence guards among the black men of the community. When the Klan tried to attack Dr. Perry's house, they were met with rifle fire. The Klan heroes fled, very discouraged.

Dr. Perry was framed on the charge of performing an abortion on a white woman. Dr. Perry is a devout Catholic, who would not perform legal abortions in the Monroe hospital. His Catholicism made the Klan, which is anti Catholic as well as anti Negro, hate him all the more. The day on which he was supposed to have performed the abortion, he was defending his home against Klan attacks. Dr. Perry spent eight months in prison for this offense. Another example of Monroe justice.

After the famous Freedom Rides in the Spring and Summer of 1961, Williams made an appeal to Freedom Riders to come to Monroe. In early August, some 17 of them did. Williams wanted to use the Freedom Riders, those who went to Monroe were all white, to demonstrate black and white solidarity to the Negro community and also to the whites of Monroe.

The Freedom Riders and some local Negro youths formed the Monroe Non Violent Action Committee, MNVAC. There was not merely a complete lack of police protection for the Negroes of Monroe and their white allies, but the police actively aided white racists in their attacks. One of the Freedom Riders was arrested on a patently false charge. The Riders and the MNVAC picketed the jail in protest. They were attacked by white mobs. The police made no attempt to stop the attacks. When one of the Freedom Riders took photos of racist attacks and police aid to these attacks, he was arrested. On August 27, a mob of from 2,000 to

5,000 racists threatened the pickets. The police arrested the pickets, all 50 of them. Some Negroes had come down to the picket line in an auto to try to rescue the pickets. The police stopped them when one of the pickets, a white girl, entered the car. They arrested them, seized a shotgun they had been carrying for their protection and gave it to a member of the racist mob. The racist beat one of the pickets with it. The police did not arrest him.

After the pickets had been arrested, the mob threatened to attack the Negro community. The Negroes were angry and panicky. A white couple drove through the Negro section and were seized and threatened by a Negro mob. Williams took them into his home to save their lives. He, three other Negroes who had been in his house that evening and a white Freedom rider were then charged with kidnapping.

One of the Freedom Riders who had been arrested was locked in a cell with<sup>a</sup> prisoner who attacked him and beat him badly. The prisoner later confessed that he had done this at the urging of the Monroe police, who promised that they would drop the charges against him, if he would beat up a Freedom Rider.

Robert Williams escaped from Monroe. He escaped first to Canada and from Canada to Cuba. The FBI sent out a 'wanted' circular on Williams stating that he was criminally insane and highly dangerous (an encouragement to shoot him on sight). The Royal Canadian Mounted Police also searched for him. He escaped both of these highly publicized police forces and found asylum in Cuba.

Williams has been criticized for escaping to Cuba by some who are in sympathy with him. Some think he should have stayed in some State in the North and fought extradition to North Carolina. It is difficult to agree with this view. If Williams had been extradited to North Carolina, he would certainly have been killed in prison.

Others criticize him for going to Cuba, which they regard as ruled by a dictatorial regime which has betrayed the Cuban revolution. Williams had long been sympathetic to revolutions in under developed countries and in particular to the Cuban revolution. He was unaware of the extent to which it had become bureaucratized and captured by the stalinists. He certainly became aware of this, when after a short time in Cuba, he was asked by Castro to make broadcasts to the U.S. over Radio Havana. The stalinists who controlled Radio Havana refused to let him make the broadcasts, obviously because they didn't control Williams. Castro issued an order and Williams is now making broadcasts. Despite any criticisms one might have of the bureaucratic regime of Cuba, one cannot criticize Williams for going there. He had nowhere else to go, and he went there to save his life and the lives of his wife and children.

Monroe and Robert Williams have become symbols in the Negro struggle in America. They are symbols of uncompromising militancy. Symbols of not looking to the Federal government for protection against racist attack, but of self-protection. The atmosphere in Monroe, as in many parts of the South of the U.S., could be described as almost fascist. Despite this and despite great provocation, the Negroes of Monroe did not kill or wound anyone under Robert Williams leadership. They fired over the heads of racist attackers to discourage them and repel their attacks.

In other parts of the South, Negroes have also defended themselves against attacks. This was not done from any influence of Williams, but as men trying to save their lives and the lives of their families. Since Williams has socialist sympathies and is sympathetic to the struggles of the colonial countries throughout the world, he and Monroe have become symbols of a link between the freedom struggles of American Negroes and the struggles of oppressed people throughout the world.

The defendants in the case are out on bail. The bail was raised by the Committee to Aid the Monroe Defendants (suite 1117, 141 Broadway, New York 6, New York). This committee was set up by the Monroe Freedom Riders, on their return to the North. It consists of radicals and others, active in the Negro struggle. We have established branches in many of the large cities of the U.S. These frame up victims must receive the best defence possible. Many different methods may have to be used. A small part of this defence is to publicise their case as widely as it possibly can be.

## WORK BREAK ?

We draw the attention of all militants to the following outrageous proposals recently put forward by the management of a large North London factory:

'Due to increased competition and a keen desire to remain in business, we find it necessary to institute a new policy. We are asking that somewhere between starting and quitting time, and without infringing too much on the time devoted to lunch period, coffee breaks, rest periods, story telling, holiday planning, and the rehashing of last night's telly programme, each employee endeavour to find some time that can be set aside and known as the "Work Break". To some, this may seem a radical innovation. But we honestly believe the idea has great possibilities. The adoption of the "Work Break" plan is not compulsory. It is hoped, however, that each employee will find enough time to give the plan a fair trial.'

We call on all sections of the movement to oppose these dastardly suggestions most vigorously!

# THE LONG RESOLUTION

(tune: Marching through Georgia)

Come and join the Party, boys; we'll put the world to right.  
We meet to plan the future every other Wednesday night;  
And when we're all assembled, what a glorious stirring sight -  
Passing a long resolution!

## CHORUS

Hurrah! Hurrah! The cause is surely won.  
Hurrah! Hurrah! It was such jolly fun,  
When everybody voted and we passed it three to none,  
Passing our own resolution!

The statesmen of the world receive our motions every day:  
From Oslo down to Cape Town you will find them thrown away.  
You'll see them swirling gaily down the road to Mandalay,  
Hundreds of fine resolutions!

In Bonn, we hear, they put our resolutions in a frame;  
The U.N. light their pipes with them; they're just the job, they claim.  
Beneath the Arc de Triomphe there's an everlasting flame,  
Burning up old resolutions!

Some comrades greet our motions with unkind remarks and mirth,  
And say they get us nowhere; they're more trouble than they're worth.  
But if we put them end to end, they'd girdle round the Earth:  
Oh, what a long resolution!

Sometimes we used to send a motion to the N.E.C.  
But everyone who sent one was expelled immediately:  
That's why our numbers dwindled until now we're only three,  
Still passing long resolutions!

We sent a motion to the Mayor; he couldn't quite decide  
If it was a summons, or to say his aunt had died.  
He changed it at the grocer's for a giant box of Tide,  
Our lovely long resolution!

But soon it will be fine, we know: our programme's all laid out.  
We've read the works of Lenin, and of Marx we have no doubt.  
We only need some workers, now, to help us sorting out  
Thousands of long resolutions!

'Why don't the workers seem to like the future that we've planned?'  
'You were never a Marxist or you'd surely understand -  
It's all the fault of Gaitskell and his petit-bourgeois band,  
Passing the wrong resolutions!'.  
E. Morse.

# you, again...

November 12, 1961.

...I find myself in complete agreement with the views stated in the pamphlets 'Socialism Reaffirmed' and 'Meaning of Socialism'. My arrival at this was somewhat tortuous, due to living in rural England!

I joined one of the peculiar country cells of the C.P. at sixteen. Out at seventeen (although no more than a vague dissatisfaction with having no more to do than paint 'Save the Rosenbergs' on rustic bridges). I joined the Labour Party and almost immediately started my National Service. When I came out I worked for a year in a shop. Then got married. Then got a job as Assistant Organizer with our nearby County Constituency Labour Party.

Moving from VFS and Tribune I finally had a meeting with an SLL organizer from London. 'Of course, your position is very useful to us, unless we want you somewhere else'. The one contact was enough. I could no longer really believe the entrust tactics of the various Trot groups.

So I was out... without contact with 'organized' politics until I enthusiastically went up to the Rank-and-File Conference, at Denison House, in January 1961, with one sole ILPer. Since then we have got together with similar thinking comrades. There are now 6 or 7 of us. Some of my own age have come into this through Committee of 100 activities and, significantly, without having had to 'go through the experience' of the usual disillusioning preamble.

Neil D., Ipswich.

March 24, 1962.

I have at last finally withdrawn active support from the Labour Party. I originally warned Cllr. A.S. what to expect. He also has had enough.

Don't laugh: Tom T. has at last left the C.P., over the Soviet tests... and joined the Salvation Army. We'll have the Pope reading 'Solidarity' next!

I will cycle out to Hextable one evening to hear of the 'intrigues' that surround 'Socialism Reaffirmed'.

Alan W., Northfleet.

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April 10, 1962.

The leaders of the Committee of 100 knew they were breaking the Official Secrets Act last December, even if they didn't expect it to be used against them, and the Committee of 100 has been technically guilty of conspiracy and incitement ever since its formation.

It is ridiculous to complain if the State uses a dirty trick against you after you have tried to reject its whole dirty game by throwing down the biggest challenge you can. If it hadn't been the Official Secrets Act it would have been something else. They were bound to get us sooner or later, and if we didn't all go into this with our eyes open it's time we began looking around us. The authorities had simply lost patience and determined to choose some obscure but active victims as a deterrent for the rest of us. What did we expect?

There's no point getting angry about this particular trial. This sort of thing is the State's job, it is what government is for. The only consistent defence against the Official Secrets Act charges would have been to refuse to plead and then to replace the basic premise of the prosecution (that the safety and interest of the State is the supreme law) with the only proper premise of any sort of justice (that the safety and interest of the people is the supreme law). The only consistent reply to the conviction, sentence and failure of appeal is to show our solidarity with the Six by following their example and continuing their work. And any pressure for release is not consistent with this reply.

To pretend that the Wethersfield demonstration was not prejudicial to the safety and interest of the State betrays an attitude to political facts that is either dangerously ingenuous or equally dangerously disingenuous. Of course the demonstration was subversive of the State - any resistance to the State subverts its power and prestige, and even if the demonstration had no practical effect whatever, its effect as propaganda by deed is far from negligible. Whoever thought up this defence was either ignorant or dishonest about what such a demonstration means.

It really is time that people who organize and attend demonstrations of the Committee of 100 began to work out what they are doing. Non-violent barricades in the streets and non-violent sabotage of military bases must be something more than drastic gimmicks to get publicity. What are they?

I don't agree with what 'Solidarity' thinks they are, but at least it is trying to make people consider the implications and effects of their

actions, and at least it doesn't go around with its head in the clouds imagining that you can trip the State up and then cry for help when it gives you a kick.

For goodness' sake let's face facts and stop trying to be all things to all men. No bishop means no King, said James I. Ban the Bomb means Ban the State. The authorities know it. Let's make sure we do as well.

Nicolas W., N.W.6.

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April 11, 1962.

I was very much impressed with the work of 'Solidarity' and found it close to my own viewpoint, in particular that it lacked the constant historical harpings so much present in C.P. and Trotskyite literature. The general simplicity and directness made me feel that what was written was done so out of a genuine concern for the present and future and not merely as a record of historical evolution.

For myself I would like to try and apply some of your ideas (and my own) through the Committee of 100, in particular through the Industrial Sub-Committee whom I hope to contact shortly.

I would be interested in contacting other supporters around this area with the idea of coordinating our efforts in particular in relation to the Committee of 100 and whatever organisations evolve out of it.

Edwin B., Isleworth.

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April 24, 1962.

...Very little real sense is written about the Negro movement in this country. The bulk of the writing is liberal or social democratic verbiage. The Left of the movement tends to be either nationalist, which is simply a diversion from the real struggle; or vulgar Marxist, prating about how only socialism can solve the Negro problem, which is sheer nonsense. I don't know which annoys me more: the pseudo Leftist idiocy or the collaborationism of the liberals. The same problem arises in the ban-the-Bomb movement. One is between the people who want to support their government's peace campaign and the stone pacifists.

Last week I was at a reception for Dr. Perry of Monroe, who was visiting New York for a few days. Most of the people at the reception were Catholic pacifists of the Catholic Worker movement. They were quite shocked at Dr. Perry's espousal of self-defence and even more at my seconding of him. Since Perry and I were the only people at the meeting who had been active in the Negro Freedom movement, they had to criticize us as outsiders. I find that most of these people are not pacifists for moral or philosophical reasons, but for aesthetic reasons. They have a physical horror of violence that reminds me of a little child's reaction to a lump of dog turd. When I meet someone who is a pacifist for moral or political reasons, like Lawrence O., I find it quite refreshing; even though I am no more persuaded of pacifism than I ever was.

Owen C., New York.

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Enclosed a quid for 'Solidarity' and especially the pamphlet on the Trial of the 100. Excellently written. Keep it up. I may yet become an anarchistical, vulgar, obscene, non-respecter of all authority... if I try hard enough!

John D., Nottingham.

May 6, 1962.

I liked the article 'Working Class Consciousness'. I have often noted the 'equalitarian' aspect of working class consciousness, but it is unknown to middle class socialists, particularly those of the vanguard groups. I once read Tony Cliff's 'Stalinist Russia' and in this he sets out his conception of a workers' state. He envisages labour-time tickets being paid out to workers who, of course, would in this way receive goods equivalent to the time they had worked. I felt this was not the way workers themselves would organise it at all. They are far more likely to say: 'Bill has five children, give him a bit more than me - I've only got one and the wife's working'. These vanguard people understand nothing of working class values.

A point which is not mentioned is that not only being together in the factory brings working class consciousness, but also living together on housing estates, or in the same neighbourhoods.

I don't agree with your statement that you are putting forward a new type of socialism. Actually you are returning to the old socialism which has for many years been eroded and distorted by the planners.

I would have written to you before this, but I am housebound with three children and so unable to attend meetings. This, of course, has had its advantages as for years I have mixed only with normal, working class persons instead of the 'politicals' who often lose contact with real life because they only speak with each other.

Sheila L., Whetstone, N.20



# THE CIVIL LIBERTIES FRAUD...

## I. A CASE OF CIVIC DISOBEDIENCE

BY ANDY ANDERSON

On Friday, April 27, I was dragged up before the beaks and dragged out again before I could state my defence. I had been 'summoned to appear before the Magistrates' Court, Dartford, Kent, to show cause why' I had not paid 2/4d. arrears of rates. This sum represents 1/2d. for each of the years 1960 and 1961 which is the portion of my rates which goes towards Civil Defence. But for the magistrates, the operative word was 'appear'. They used force to stop me from 'showing cause why'.

The local authority instituting the proceedings was the Labour-controlled Dartford Rural District Council. My contention throughout a lengthy correspondence with the Council, which started on January 18, 1961, was that all available evidence showed there can be no Civil Defence in the event of a nuclear attack, and that I therefore refused to pay for a service they could not provide.

The Clerk to the R.D.C. (F. Milburn) began the proceedings with the 'legal' and bureaucratic mumbo-jumbo of reading extracts from several financial documents such as those showing at how much I had been assessed for rates, how much I had paid for the two years 1960 and 1961, and how much I had not paid. All these documents were handed to the Magistrates' Clerk who handed them to the magistrates. All this paper was solemnly scrutinised by these so-called 'justices of the peace'. The Clerk to the R.D.C. then asked for a Distress Warrant to be issued to recover the 'arrears of rates'. All this took about ten minutes, after which I was asked if I had anything to say. There was a lot I wanted to say, so the 'oath administrator' came forward with his card and bible. I didn't want an oath-taking ceremony, so I was asked to affirm.


I began by stressing in a solemn voice the solemn phrase in the solemn summons signed by a solemn magistrate which ordered me to 'show cause why' I had not paid the sum of 2/4d. I explained that the rate for Civil Defence is .5ld. in the £. The rateable value of my house is £27; a fraction over 1/2d. multiplied by 27 equals, near enough 1s. 2d... The Magistrates' Clerk interrupted: 'Their worships understand all that'. I said: 'Good. I'm glad to know it. But the amount collected by local authorities is only a small portion of the total spent on Civil Defence. The Government, in addition, spends about £18 million per year, collected through taxation'.

The Magistrates' Clerk interrupted again: 'We are not concerned here with Civil Defence' he said. 'We only want to know whether you can pay the arrears of rates'. 'But' I argued, 'the Dartford R.D.C. do not deny that this 2/4d. is the amount they want for Civil Defence. All the Council's letters to me for the last 12 months have been headed "Civil Defence Expenditure". One letter specifically refers to the amount for 1960 as: "a sum equal to the rate levy for Civil Defence".'

It was now the turn of the Chairman of the Magistrates to interrupt. 'You cannot keep talking here about Civil Defence', he said. 'This Court has only powers to decide whether a Distress Warrant shall be issued'.

'I have been summoned "to show cause why" I have not paid this amount', I said very slowly. 'I am going to show excellent cause why; and why all other rate payers should also refuse to pay that part of their rates which goes towards Civil Defence'.

'Look here!' said the beaks' chairman, waving his arm. 'We've got a very busy day and we're not going to listen to political speeches about Civil Defence. You are in arrears with your rates. You've got to tell us whether you can pay these arrears or whether you cant so that we can decide whether a Distress Warrant.....'

 'I am not going to be dictated to by you!.....'

For a moment there was complete silence. The members of the Court were aghast. Their eyes widened with incredulity. Had they heard right? Had this peasant in the dock actually shouted and interrupted the Chairman of the Magistrates? The mouths of three 'legal' gentlemen sitting in the middle of the room dropped open (one of these was the Police Prosecutor. Now, what was he there for?).

As the Magistrates' Clerk half rose from his seat, I continued: 'You have ordered me here today "to show cause why" I have not paid 2/4d. of my rates. I'm not going to be involved in this farce by saying what you want me to say. I am determined "to show cause why", but in my own way. I propose to do so by quoting from correspondence I have had with the Dartford R.D.C., the Kent County Council and the Home Office...'

While I was speaking, the Magistrates Clerk was saying something about sending me out of the Court. I went on... 'First I want to clear up some aspects of Civil Defence on which there appears to be considerable misunderstanding....'

The magistrates' Clerk rapped out an order: 'Take him out, constable!'

As the burly copper made his way across the Court, I was saying: 'There are many reasons why ordinary people are deceived...'. The policeman approached the dock, I stepped to the side and sat on the floor.

'One of the main reasons is that.....'. The copper grabbed me and dragged me across the Court. As far as the centre of the court-room this was easy; the parquet floor was highly polished. But right in front of their worships, he got into difficulties. Another 'wonderful' policeman ran in to help.

While all this was going on, I was shouting: 'This is their justice! This is their freedom! This proves their Civil Defence is a fraud!' etc. The coppers struggled to lift me. Under the eyes of the three beaks, they seemed embarrassed by their apparent inefficiency. They became flustered and were rougher than was really necessary. My raincoat and jacket had now slipped up my arms and were covering my head. I shouted louder. There was a tearing sound as my shirt sleeves were ripped out. I later discovered they'd also torn the back of my shirt. Several buttons fell onto the floor and rolled across the court. At last they half carried and half dragged me out and dumped me in the corridor.

I stood up, pulled my jacket and raincoat down from over my head, and began to address the thirty or so rather startled people waiting in the corridor (various accused, their friends, relations and legal representatives). It was hard luck on the other law-breakers. They must have been wondering what was awaiting them. 'I've been summoned to come here today, but they won't let me speak' I began. 'You can't speak here', said a third copper. I sat on the floor. '...and I would like to tell you why...'. 'Chuck 'im out!' said a 'wonderful' gent in blue. 'For two years I've refused to pay rates for Civil...'. Two large, uniformed bodies dragged and threw me out of a side door of the court building.

As I heard the key turn in the lock behind me, I got up, ran to the front of the building, up the steps and in again through the main door. Two policemen charged through the throng in the corridor as if about to score a try, scattering innocent and guilty on their way. They caught me. Before I could say a word, I was bounced out. I mounted the steps again and opened the door. A red-faced 'guardian of the law' stood in the way. I argued with him, 'I've been summoned "to show cause why" I haven't paid my rates for Civil Defence. Why won't you let me in?'.

'Because you are going to cause a disturbance. Now get out!'.

'I want to do what I've been summoned to do', I remonstrated.

'And stay out!' ordered red-face. He then turned and called: 'Hey, Paddy! take over. I'm going home. I've been on night duty'. Paddy took over the guard duty at the main door. He was the beefy white-faced character who had first tried to drag me out of the Court room. We now only needed a blue-faced copper to make the proceedings thoroughly patriotic. I asked Paddy if he would let me in. 'You're not coming in here any more' he growled. If there's one thing that makes 'our' police and J.P.s endearing, it is their passionate regard for the law.

'For the record', I asked, 'do I understand that, although I have been summoned, you're not going to let me into the building?'. 'Yes!', snapped white-faced Paddy. 'Clear off!'.

I walked down the steps to a group of five reporters, and talked to them. It was 11.35 a.m. One, who said he was from the 'Daily Mirror' took some photographs of my torn clothing. During the next half-hour I made two more unsuccessful attempts to get back into the Court. At 12.10 I left.

I have since discovered that while I was outside the building, my name was 'called' again. As I did not 'appear', a Distress Warrant was issued.

It is clear that in attempting to expose the fraud of Civil Defence, we are touching a very sore spot.

SOLIDARITY PAMPHLET No. 9

## THE CIVIL DEFENCE FRAUD

by ANDY ANDERSON.

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At times a small and seemingly trivial event exposes, in a glaring way, the most elaborate of 'official' myths and deceptions.

This is the story of how one man's struggle against bureaucratic authority brought real issues to the attention of thousands...

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8d. (post free) from: E. Morse,  
68, Hill Farm, Whipsnade, nr.  
Dunstable (Beds).

SOLIDARITY PAMPHLET No. 10  
(produced jointly with ILP)

## THE 100 VERSUS THE STATE

WETHERSFIELD...

TRAFALGAR SQUARE...

THE TRIAL...

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What are the implications for socialists of self-reliance, of collective law-breaking, of mass civil disobedience in the assertion of human rights? How have the State and the 'traditional' organisations faced up to the challenge? How can the campaign be carried forward?

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8d. (post free) from E. Morse.

## 2. THREAT TO RIGHTS OF ASSEMBLY

### BY PAT ARROWSMITH

On Friday, April 13, 1962, I was arrested in the Liverpool Docks and charged with 'wilful obstruction'. The previous evening I had spoken on a BBC television programme - and among other things had advocated industrial action against the Bomb.

At 12.30 approx. on the day of my arrest, an open-air dock-gate meeting was being held in Bootle, Liverpool, at the bottom of Nelson St., near the Langton Control entrance. This was part of the current campaign to involve Merseyside industrial workers in CND. About a week previously I had met several of the leading dockers from the area, including members of the Portworkers' Committee. It was agreed to hold the meeting as a joint effort. Dennis Kelly, a TGWU docker and member of the Portworkers' Committee, agreed to chair the meeting and to encourage dockers to attend. I was to draft notices and distribute them early in the morning, at the dock-gates. Subsequently I met J. McCann (TGWU Waterways section and dock-gate man in the area) who also agreed to speak at the meeting and to distribute notices about it. I also contacted T. Lord, Chairman of TGWU Branch No.3 and a local docker, who also agreed to speak. I was told that the bottom of Nelson St. was a place where dock-gate meetings were very often held; that it was an accepted place for such meetings (strike meetings, religious meetings, etc.). No one suggested that the police should be informed.

At 7.15 a.m. approx. on Friday, April 14, about a dozen CND members came down and distributed notices of the meeting (including a list of the speakers) at the dock gates. Notices were given to the dock-gate police (members of the Liverpool police force). One or two of them asked whether police permission had been obtained. The CND members referred them to me. I told one policeman that I had not notified the police as I had understood it would not be necessary, since meetings were held so frequently at the bottom of Nelson St. A couple of weeks previously a similar meeting had been held in the road, near the Gladstone Dock entrance, further north, and there had been no indication from the police that they should have been notified or their permission sought. I said I would immediately notify the Bootle police of the impending meeting if the constable so wished. He replied it would not be necessary as the dock-gate police had already rung up Bootle Police Station and told them about the meeting.

At about midday I arrived at the bottom of Nelson St. Dockers gradually assembled. By 12.15, one hundred or more dockers had assembled. The meeting started at about 12.30 as the loudspeaker arrived late. Between 12 and 12.30, while up to 200 dockers were gathering on the pavements and road, no action was taken by the dock-gate police. The Bootle police were not present (Nelson St. is in the Bootle police province).

Leaflets were distributed among the crowd and to any police in the vicinity.

At 12.30 approx. the meeting was opened by Dennis Kelly. After he had spoken, there were brief speeches by J. McCann, T. Lord and B. Doherty. J. McCann was the only speaker who actually called for industrial action by dockers - the others, including myself, confined themselves to putting the general CND case). Mr. Doherty was not billed as a speaker. He is a joiner working for the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, Chairman of the local NFBTO, with whom I had previously been in touch. He had been encouraging people on his job to come to the meeting, had given them notices about it, and agreed to speak at the last moment. Between 12.40 and 12.45, four Bootle police arrived in a car. One of them tapped Mr. Doherty on the shoulder and told him to stop speaking. He stopped and gave the loud-hailer to me.

Nelson St. is a very narrow street, seldom used by traffic at that time of day. At such meetings, speakers frequently stand in the middle of the road - Bessie Braddock, for instance, although she has never yet been charged with obstruction for so doing! Throughout our meeting, all the speakers remained on the pavement.

Soon after I started speaking a fire engine came round the sharp corner from the Docks Rd. into Nelson St. (People living in the area, and Mr. Doherty, who used to work for the Bootle Fire Brigade, claim that it was a curious round-about route for a fire engine to be taking, whatever its destination, in view of the location of the Fire Brigade Station) It was inevitably going slowly. Dockers standing in its path immediately got out of the way. During the meeting one or two other vehicles drove along Nelson St. On each occasion, people immediately made way.

While I was speaking the Bootle police ordered people on the road to move on to the pavements. They moved. Both Dennis Kelly and I asked the audience to draw in close to the speakers in order to prevent obstruction on the road.

It was a quiet meeting. Very few questions were asked. It was formally closed at about 1. p.m. All the other speakers went straight back to work on the docks. As the audience was dispersing, a Bootle policeman asked me for my name and address. (On the notices the dock-gate police had received only one woman speaker was listed, namely myself. The Committee's address was also on the leaflets!). I therefore refused to give my name and address, saying that if I did so, it would imply that I thought I was guilty of some misdemeanour. (In any case, I had already identified myself to the dock-gate police.) I was arrested and a short while later was told that it was for 'obstruction'.

On arrival at Bootle police station I still refused to give my name and address and for the same reason. I was held in custody until 3 p.m. I said I would not say anything nor give my name and address

until I had had legal advice. I was provided with facilities for obtaining a lawyer. My CND colleagues were telephoned and asked to help find a lawyer. I was informed that whether or not I had received legal advice, I would be brought before the magistrates at 3 p.m. I said that until I had talked to a lawyer I would not give my name and address as I required legal advice as to whether or not I was obliged to do so. I was told that if I did not give it in Court, I would be kept in custody. About 20 minutes before going to Court, I spoke on the telephone to a solicitor (obtained at random from a telephone directory, as there was no time to try to find a sympathetic lawyer or to make adequate contact with my CND colleagues about the matter). He advised me to give the police my name and address as I had been arrested for obstruction.

I then gave my name and address and was formally charged. A special court was convened at 3 p.m. At my request the case was adjourned until 10 a.m. on Monday, April 30. I was remanded on bail in the sum of £10 on my own recognizances. The officer giving evidence in Court that afternoon stated that I had been ordered to stop addressing the meeting but had refused to do so. In fact I had not been ordered to stop speaking. The police evidence given on April 30 included nothing to this effect.

On Monday, April 30, about 100 supporters came to Court. Some 60 or 70 of them were dockers and building workers, taking time off work to be there. Witnesses for the defence included Dennis Kelly, J. McCann, B. Doherty, 2 other dock workers, 2 CND members, and Mr. H. James, secretary of Liverpool Co-Op Party and a Liverpool J.P., who was present at the end of the meeting. The Prosecution called 4 Bootle policemen as witnesses. By the middle of the afternoon, one of the magistrates, a doctor, had to return to work, so the case was adjourned until Monday, May 7, at 2.30 p.m. I was again remanded on bail in the sum of £10. On May 7, at the resumed hearing, I was found 'Guilty' and fined £2.

## VERBIAGE

Having broken with all the traditional organizations, this Conference of Solidarists resolves:

To cease making contributions  
To insert substitutions  
Into lengthy resolutions  
On ultimate solutions  
Like denouncing restitutions  
Of the habit of ablutions  
Or such like absolutions  
After revolutions

Or proclaiming destitutions  
Of existing constitutions  
And all public institutions  
Derived by evolution  
During the execution  
Of some previous resolutions  
On ultimate solutions...  
Etc., etc., etc...

Submitted by the Whipsnade section.

# PEASANT REVOLT IN NORTH KENT

Swanley Junction is on the A. 20, about 13 miles from London. On Tuesday May 1st the Dartford Rural District Council (which had taken Andy Anderson to Court \* a few days earlier for refusing to pay Civil Defence rates) met there. Andy decided to present his case directly to the Council. About 15 other people went along with him, determined to 'invade' the council and explore a new form of civil disobedience.

To take the council by surprise we enter the grounds via a hole in the fence. We reach the 'strangers gallery' of the Council Chamber. All is silent except for the sound of one councillor speaking and others snoring. We have leaflets denouncing the civil defence fraud and demanding that the Council discuss the matter with us. Two of us walk boldly onto the floor of the Council Chamber and distribute the leaflets to the slumbering councillors. They wake up. We hear pompous snorts and cries of 'this is not a public meeting!'. The 'official' gathering is adjourned for ten minutes.

After the resumption of the council meeting one of our numbers, Brian Richardson, interrupts the proceedings and asks if civil defence will be discussed. The councillors are thunderstruck: a member of the public has dared to move his lips! And actual words came out! The impertinence of it! It's surely against all regulations. Must be a contravention of the 1831 Act for the Protection of Councillors Dignity or something. Or does it come under the section 'Behaviour Prejudicial to the Security of the Chamber'?

The Chairman gradually recovers his wits and tells Richardson to be quiet. Richardson again asks for an assurance that civil defence will be discussed. The assurance is not forthcoming. Brian then introduces the first of the 'unofficial' speakers. Andy Anderson leads off. He tells how the Dartford Council, Kent Council and the Home Office had all refused to answer his questions on civil defence. He describes how the Court refused to allow him to present his case.

The councillors become flustered. Mixed cries of 'Clear the gallery!', 'Shut up!', 'Take him out!', and 'Adjourn!' are heard. The meeting is again adjourned for a ten-minute unofficial tea-break \* (no vote was taken: we shall never know whether anybody wished to vote against this resolution... or abstain!). The councillors dither. One or two sit listening to Andy's speech. Most of them rush for the door again (I begin to think they've perhaps all got dysentery).

At this point an embarrassed country copper arrives. He looks around the Chamber in amazement. Such goings on! Nervously, he asks Andy to leave. Andy squats... and continues speaking. The copper attempts to drag him out. Eventually, Andy, still speaking, is carried out by the constable, clumsily assisted by a councillor. I had visions of a police strike here, the councillor not being a member of the policeman's union.

Another of our members then starts speaking. Two police inspectors arrive and carry him out. Things

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\* See p. 15.

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\* See p. 3.



are going exactly as planned. Our third speaker rises... and is eventually carried out. Then a fourth. By this time the Council meeting is completely disrupted. No councillors are left in the Chamber. The 'unofficials' have an absolute majority. A resolution could have been passed unanimously!

There are another eleven of us left to speak. The Dartford Rural District Council surrenders. Making virtue of a necessity, the Chairman declares the meeting closed, some two hours before the usual time. At this point, the rest of us troop out and go home.

The press publicity in Kent was on a wider scale than we expected.

The Kent Reporter (May 4) describes the events over several columns: 'Amazing Scenes at Rural Council Meeting'. So does the Dartford, Crayford and Swanley Chronicle: 'Ban the Bomb Demonstrators Twice Stop Council Meeting'.

Although only one step towards exposing the civil defence fraud, it was a valuable one. It showed what a few ordinary people can do, at very little cost to anyone. No one was charged. It also showed that the key to success in small local demonstrations of this kind is simplicity, audacity, determination and an ability to keep one's trap shut... beforehand.

Ron Bailey.

## WORKING CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS

(continued from our previous issue)

The development of the working class towards socialism does not only show itself in the way workers constantly try to organize their own lives and their own activity in the factory. Nor does it only show itself during periods of great revolutionary upsurge, when the working class has repeatedly demanded the most radical change in all social relations. The working class has also struggled against capitalism, and this from the very beginning of its history, in a conscious and explicit way. This tendency to organize for permanent and open struggle runs like a red thread through the whole fabric of modern society.

From a fairly early date, workers have seen the need systematically to challenge the whole organization of the society around them. By creating political parties, they have attempted to go beyond the mere defence of their economic interests. They have sought to oppose their own conceptions of society to those of the bourgeoisie. They have sought to go beyond shop floor solutions and to raise the question of power at a national and even at an international level.

It is quite false to proclaim (as do the Stalinist and Trotskyist legateses of Bolshevism) that the working class 'is only capable of achieving

a trade union consciousness'. In Germany, the workers started by creating mass political organizations, from which the trade unions subsequently developed. When trade unions were first formed in the Latin countries they were not merely 'economic' organizations, struggling for limited ends. They proclaimed as their objective nothing less than the abolition of the wages system. Many of the first industrial unions in Britain had much the same aim. The constitution of the Mineworkers Union, of the N.U.R. - and to some extent even of the A.E.U. - still bear testimony to this fact.

It is also false that working class political organizations have always been created by intellectuals. Some say this to stress the backwardness of workers, who, it is implied, could never have created such organizations themselves - i.e. without 'leadership' from above. Others make the allegation in order to smear the very conception of political organization.

A moment's reflection will show that things could never have been like this. Whatever the role of intellectuals, the early organizations of the working class would never have grown and flourished had not many workers come to them, made them real, injected them with their experience, constantly participated in their activity and often sacrificed their lives for them. Workers recognised, in other words, their own fundamental needs in the programme of these organizations. This state of affairs persisted during a whole period of history. This period is now drawing to a close, both objectively and in the minds of the workers, and this despite the desperate attempts of self-styled revolutionaries to keep alive the slowly dying traditional organizations.

There is therefore an autonomous development of the proletariat towards socialism. This is neither a mechanical consequence of the 'objective conditions' of working class life. Nor is it due to some mysterious biological trend. It is a process which finds its driving force in the constant opposition of workers to capitalist methods of organizing production. It is an historical process. And it is essentially a process of struggle. Let no one distort what we are saying. Workers are not 'born' socialists. They are not miraculously converted into socialists on entering a factory. They tend to become socialists - or perhaps one should say they make themselves socialists - in the course of, and through, the daily struggle against capitalism.

This is not to deny the importance of understanding the process theoretically. We are not philistines. The experience of groups of workers in one industry or in one country must be brought to others. The wider implications must be drawn out. Artificial barriers must be broken down. Objectives must be constantly redefined in the light of new developments. But such intellectual understanding can never be a substitute for participation in the struggle itself. If it is not nurtured in struggle, if it remains based on the reality of a previous period, it can only act as an impediment to effective action. (One of our next issues will contain a full article on the role of theory in the revolutionary movement).

# THE STRUGGLE WITHIN<sup>the</sup> WORKING CLASS

What is the struggle for socialism about? Where does it take place? Against whom is it directed? What are the conditions for its success? Here again there is much sloppy thinking. In our previous publications we have dealt at some length with the struggle in production. But the working class does not only fight capitalism as something external to itself.

If it were only a question of the material power of the capitalist class, of their State and of their Army, capitalist society would long ago have been overthrown. Capitalism has no strength other than the labour power of those it exploits. It survives because it succeeds in getting its slaves to accept their status. Its most powerful weapons are not those it uses consciously: its police, its army, its courts. Those are but adjuncts to its rule, important though they be. Other things help the ruling class. In particular the persistence and constant re-birth of capitalist ideas amongst the ranks of the workers.

The workers is no stranger to capitalist society. He is born into it, he lives in it, he participates in it and makes it work. Capitalist ideas, capitalist values and capitalist attitudes constantly permeate the working class. Workers develop or retain these ideas precisely because they are an exploited class. From childhood on, patterns of thought are imposed on them by 'established' society. The perpetuation of capitalism and of its institutions tends to perpetuate capitalist ideas amongst workers. The 'patriotic' notions of even the most militant workers is one of the most striking illustrations of this 'dual consciousness'.

The working class is submitted to systematic indoctrination. It is deprived of the material prerequisites of culture. It is even deprived of its own past, of which it only knows what its exploiters - or its own 'leaders' - allow it to know.\* It is deprived of an awareness of itself as a universal class. This results from local, occupational or national divisions, imposed on the working class by the present organization of society. It is even deprived of an awareness of its present status, all channels of information being in the hands of the ruling class and of the labour bureaucracies.

Despite these handicaps, workers fight back. They make up for what is kept from them. They develop a healthy suspicion of bourgeois indoctrination and a basic indifference to its content. By many devious routes they tend to assimilate the culture of which they are deprived. They even lay the basis of a new culture. Scholastically they may ignore

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\* There has been a systematic distortion of working class history in which bourgeois, bureaucratic, 'elitist', and other interested parties have all participated. We will return to this theme in a later issue.

their past. But they find it in front of them, again and again, in the form of conditions and rights to be defended.

✓✓ The situation of the proletariat in modern society is therefore profoundly 'contradictory'. In the course of production the class constantly creates the elements of a new form of social organization and of a new culture. Outside of production it never frees itself completely from the influence of the environment in which it lives.

The constant re-birth of capitalist tendencies within working class ranks is the most formidable obstacle to the development of socialist consciousness. This even takes place amongst the most advanced sections of workers. The most subtle and pernicious influences of capitalist society are found where least expected. They permeate social-democratic, stalinist and trotskyist thinking alike. They consist in fundamentally bourgeois ways of looking at things. Bourgeois 'common sense' is elevated into an absolute rationality. Inertia is systematically injected into the ranks of the working class, through appeals to 'leave it to those who know better' (whether these be factory managers, production experts, specialists in 'facts' of one kind or another, 'progressive' politicians... or professional revolutionaries 'with years of experience in the movement').

Capitalist methods of organization also profoundly influence the working class movement. Spontaneous, 'unofficial' activity is frowned upon. There is a suspicious attitude to new conceptions (to any idea, in fact, which has not blossomed in the head of some 'experienced' comrade). Dogmatism and hero-worship abound. There is a tendency to live on the dwindling capital of the past rather than on the realities of the present. All these notions are systematically fostered by both bourgeois and bureaucratic societies. They seep into the workers' movement through its every pore. They are in fact reflections of the very society the 'revolutionaries' are supposed to be struggling against. They reproduce in the sphere of intellectual life, and in the sphere of organization, the social relations which prevail in the capitalist factory: relations based on domination, on inequality, and on alienation.

In times of revolution, capitalist state power may be militarily crushed... yet the old social relations remain. This will happen if, in order to overthrow the old society (or under the pretext of 'efficiency') the revolutionary army or the 'new' productive apparatus have to be 're-organized' along the old lines. All the main features of the old society will then soon re-emerge.

The building of a revolutionary organization to express the aspirations of the working class is a tremendous task. But the working class can instantly destroy this achievement if it believes that all that is then required of it is to have unlimited confidence in the organization it has created. The degeneration will set in the moment the working class withdraws from the arena and hands over to 'its' organization the solution of all its problems.

(cont'd p. 28)

# SCRATCH... SCRATCH...

Here are extracts from the first of the INTERNAL BULLETINS unearthed by Pulex, our rat-group correspondent. This is from a short 'MEMORANDUM ON ORGANIZATION', dated 5.9.60, presented by the National Secretary of the Socialist Labour League to the vanguard of his 'vanguard party'.

'Solidarity' is pleased to publish this hitherto secret material for several reasons: (1) it gives our own skit-writer a rest (and an example); (2) it makes us scream; (3) it will make them scream; (4) it will put the fear of Christ into all the other outfits (to whose innermost thoughts we have access); and (5) it also raises a political point!

Will leaders make all the decisions in a socialist society? Will their sources of power and information be separate from those of the people? Will they have internal bulletins and closed books? Surely socialism is mass understanding, and collective decision-taking. What kind of society could possibly be built from the following ideas and practices?

'It has now become very necessary to discuss frankly and in greater outline than we have done previously the concrete responsibilities of LEADERSHIP'...

'We can look forward to a period in which the education of the movement both theoretically and practically will proceed under a stable and unified LEADERSHIP'...

'The situation remains very difficult in Scotland because of a lack of a local LEADERSHIP'...

'In Leeds we have a different problem. There are comrades there who can be developed into a strong local LEADERSHIP'...

'The membership in Nottingham has again dropped back and there appears to be the same difficulty that has been experienced in this district for years: inability to train a branch LEADERSHIP'...

'Coventry has now got the possibility of a strong branch and so has Birmingham, but here again the question of local LEADERSHIP is decisive.'...

'In London... the LEADERSHIP is young and inexperienced'...

'Everywhere the local problem is one of LEADERSHIP and it becomes very obvious that unless the national committee functions as a LEADERSHIP we will not be able to tackle the problem of training local LEADERS'...

'The real solution must begin with the national committee members and especially with those who in the provinces who (sic!) have not yet come forward as LEADERS'...

'But if comrades entrusted with this job are simply darting from one town to the next, say two weeks about, and the resident national committee members do nothing to consolidate the work, then our organizers are simply cons-

tantly reorganizing. We cannot tolerate such a position'...

'The Area Committee must be considered as a political LEADERSHIP'...

'LEADING full-time workers should work for a limited period with comrades in the local areas so that a discussion of problems can take place in a way that will bring the LEADERSHIP more into the picture'...

'Loose recruitment without an effective local LEADERSHIP can only lead to people drifting in and out of the League'...

'Our comrades who are on the editorial board of the youth paper should be organized as a steering committee for the youth work nationally. This should be done as distinct from faction meetings. Even though some of these comrades are young and inexperienced, the NC must set about training them to write for the paper, and to function as a LEADERSHIP with a national outlook'...

'Local branch finance is still collected in an irregular way. Here again the difficulties of LEADERSHIP are obvious'...

\* \* \* \* \*

Trotsky's 'Transitional Program' (1938) starts with the prophetic words: 'The world's political situation as a whole is chiefly characterised by a historical crisis of the LEADERSHIP of the proletariat'... 'The historical crisis of mankind is reduced to the crisis of the revolutionary LEADERSHIP'.

Nearly 25 years later, the Trotskyists seem to have succeeded in reproducing this 'crisis of leadership'... within their own ranks!!!

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## WORKING CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS (continued from p. 26).

The problems of the class can only be solved by the conscious action of the class itself. There are no short cuts. This is the lesson of all previous history. The struggle of the proletariat against capitalism is therefore, to a large extent, the struggle of the proletariat against itself. It is a struggle to free itself of all that lingers on, in its thinking, in its habits, and in its internal organization, of the society it is fighting against. The history of the working class movement is the history of the growing strength and consciousness of the working class, in the course of this struggle.

the end.